

ARTICLE 301
RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

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STATUS

The residential land use portion of the Master Plan was developed by the City Plan Commission as an integral part of The Proposed Generalized Land Use Plan, and was adopted as part of the Master Plan by the Common Council in March 1948 (J.C.C., p. 499). Since its original adoption numerous revisions have been recommended to the Common Council, and many have been adopted as amendments to the plan.

Major recent amendments include the addition of Section 301.0300 Residential Change, adopted on April 28, 1970 (J.C.C., p. 1010), which provides policies to protect existing residential areas, guide the transition of areas to or from residential use, and insure fair compensation for any relocation. Additional policies to guide residential development and residential change were adopted by Common Council on January 19, 1971 (J.C.C., pp. 58-65) as part of the planning for the Community-on-the-Move area. Further modifications were adopted by Common Council on March 7, 1972 (J.C.C., pp. 494-502) as a part of the Model Neighborhood amendments and on March 14, 1972 (J.C.C., pp. 559-564) as a part of the New Center amendments.

301.0100 RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

301.0101 Objectives

The residential land use portion of the Master Plan is directed toward three principal objectives:

1. To improve the quality of life for every resident of the city.
2. To designate areas which can be maintained and developed as good places to live.
3. To provide general residential guidelines for improvement, development and change of these areas so that they will be revitalized generation after generation.

Even those neighborhoods which have been protected from outside nuisances such as traffic or industrial noise and dirt may be blighted by having too many houses and people crowded into them. The land use plan seeks to establish the desirable number of people who will live in any given neighborhood.

The number of families in each neighborhood is governed by the types of residential structures which are permitted, and by the yard requirements of each type of building.

For the single family homes, town houses and apartments there are limits of crowding beyond which all buildings suffer by loss of light and air circulation. The land use plan sets density standards for each.

301.0102 Factors Governing the Pattern

Planning for residential areas is complicated by a pattern of growth and decay in which new houses are built in a widening circle at the fringe while deterioration and blight are destroying the city from its core.

The land use plan proposes residential areas of the city as a group of communities, each stable, maintaining and revitalizing its characteristic living values in each generation. The plan seeks to make each community one in which people will want to live for its inherent advantages generation after generation.

Some parts or neighborhoods of the city are now so badly deteriorated that they must be cleared entirely and rebuilt. However sound the economics of this rebuilding may be for areas already blighted beyond reclamation, the residential land use plan is based on the premise that it is sounder economy to build homes and neighborhoods in a way that wholesale rebuilding can be avoided. When there can be assurance of continuity in community values, each new generation will have some encouragement to remain, to build and rebuild upon the values already created.

The inducements for young couples to settle and revitalize an older community must be tangible assets. On the one hand, the community must have well maintained community facilities in schools, playgrounds, public meeting halls, shopping centers and theatres. Probably as significant, it must have a variety of dwelling types suited to varying human needs -- apartments for relatively young or old couples without children as well as single family homes for growing families.

For this reason, the land use plan proposes a balanced distribution of dwelling types in all communities. On the assumption that apartments and terraces are desirable for their convenience at points where cultural and social activities are concentrated, the plan proposes areas for multiple development around the shopping centers and public centers in each community.

The plan recognizes that many people find it desirable to live near the metropolitan centers such as the cultural center, workplaces such as the central business district, or beauty spots of the region on the riverfront. For this reason, the land use plan proposes a greater concentration of apartments and terraces for these areas than other communities. Much of the two older communities within the boulevard where substantial rebuilding is necessary are proposed to have an average density, after rebuilding, of 20 to 30 units per net acre.

301.0103 Criteria for Residential Areas

The Future General Land Use map shows five categories of residential areas:

1. Low density single family residential areas, should have an overall density up to 12 dwelling units per net residential acre, and provide conservation and reinforcement for existing viable residential development. All new housing should be developed compatibly with existing housing, and should consist of predominantly one and two family structures, with some 1-family attached townhouses and apartments.
2. Low-medium density residential areas, should have an overall density of 13 to 20 dwelling units per net residential acre, and provide conservation and reinforcement for existing viable residential development. All new housing should be developed compatibly with existing housing and should consist of predominantly 1-family attached townhouses, and some apartments.
3. Medium density residential areas, should have an overall density of 21 to 30 dwelling units per net residential acre, and provide conservation and reinforcement for existing viable residential development. All new housing should be developed compatibly with existing housing and should consist of predominantly 1-family attached townhouses, and apartments, 2 stories and above.

4. High density residential areas, should have an overall density of 30 or more dwelling units per net residential acre, and provide conservation and reinforcement for existing viable residential development. All new housing should be developed compatibly with existing housing and should consist predominantly of apartments and some 1-family attached townhouses.
5. Special residential-commercial areas, (predominantly residential), should provide for new high and medium-rise apartments developed compatibly with general commercial and/or institutional uses and also should provide conservation and reinforcement for existing viable residential development. These areas should be located along major radial thoroughfares, or at a major gateway into the city, or major centers, where the intersection of freeways and major thoroughfares have off and on ramps in each direction, provided that these areas are served by, support, and complement an area of major commercial activity such as Downtown Detroit (CBD), New Center, or other employment centers. New apartment development should be above and/or alongside the compatible general commercial and/or institutional uses so that both gain accessibility and/or exposure by a thoroughfare frontage location.

Neighborhoods may have a range of residential structure types or may be homogeneous. Each local residential area should include all necessary and desirable local commercial, institutional and recreational facilities and services. Residential structures and areas should be developed in a sound manner so that extensive rebuilding will be unnecessary.

301.0104 Standards for Structures and Dwelling Units

Structure types are divided generally into five categories:

1. One family structure - house which contains only one family and which is not structurally attached to any other structure.
2. Two family structure - house which contains two families with the dwelling units arranged either over and under or side by side.
3. Low rise multiple structure - either a two story apartment structure in which the dwelling units share common halls or entryways, or attached single family houses, such as townhouses, in which each dwelling unit has a separate entrance.

4. Medium rise multiple structure - three to six story apartment structure.
5. High rise multiple structure - apartment structure with more than six stories.

For each type of structure, the Master Plan proposes standards of density, based on measurable limits of crowding, beyond which it is known that buildings will encroach on the light, air and circulation of neighboring buildings.

These standards are stated in terms of dwelling units per net acre. Since it is recognized that the number of rooms per dwelling may materially affect the total volume of an apartment structure, these standards have been adjusted to keep the relationship of total rooms to lot area constant for any given type of structure.

For example: 40 two-room dwelling units per net acre occupy 550 square feet of lot area per room. If the dwellings are reduced to one room units, the number of dwellings may be increased to 80 without changing the ratio of room to ground area, or materially changing the volume of the whole structure. Similarly, if the size of dwellings is increased to three room units, the total number of dwellings must be reduced to 25.

The following table specifies standards for the maximum number of dwelling units per net acre which should be permitted for a given structure type. For this purpose, only living rooms and bedrooms are counted.

TABLE 1

Standards for Maximum Number of Dwelling Units Per Net Acre
By Structure Type and Size of Unit

Structure Type	Maximum Units Per Net Acre					Lot Area in Square Feet	
	1-Room Units	2-Room Units	3-Room Units	4-Room Units	5-Room Units	Per Unit	Per Room ¹
One-Family Structure	7	7	7	7	7	6,000	-
Two-Family Structure	12	12	12	12	12	3,600	-
Low-Rise Multiple Structure (2-story Apartments & Townhouses)	58	29	20	15	12	-	750
Medium-Rise Multiple Structure (3- to 6 Story Apartments)	80	40	25	20	16	-	550
High-Rise Multiple Structure (Apartments, more than 6 Stories)	125	60	42	31	25	-	350

¹Only living and bedrooms are to be counted.

301.0180 Other Policies Relating to Residential Land Use

Refer to Article 103 Summary, Section 202.0100 Neighborhood Unit Pattern and Section 202.0200 Community Pattern; Section 203.0100 Future General Land Use; and Article 204 Urban Change, for other city-wide policies that specifically relate to residential uses and areas. The remainder of this chapter, Chapter III Urban Systems Policies and Chapter IV Urban Areas Policies, provide further information that relates, more generally, to residential uses and areas.

301.0190 The Map

For current information see the map entitled Future General Land Use - Detroit Master Plan, inserted at the back of this document. An enlarged copy may be obtained from the City Plan Commission.

301.0200 PUBLIC HOUSING

STATUS - The public housing portion of the Master Plan was prepared by the Detroit Housing Commission, and was originally adopted as part of the Master Plan by Common Council on June 6, 1948 (J.C.C., p. 1504). Since that date changes in locations and acquisitions have been incorporated into the plan from time to time by Common Council.

The Detroit Housing Commission provides housing for low income families unable to secure adequate housing for a rental which they can afford.

The public housing units in Detroit have been provided through the Public Works Administration, provisions of the Wagner Act of 1937, and succeeding federal legislation which provides assistance in financing the development and management of public housing.

Federal public housing legislation and guidelines, and Michigan Civil Rights Commission guidelines generally include specific standards and location criteria for public housing units.

The Detroit Housing Commission has used recent federal programs to provide public housing units on scattered sites for large families; to lease a portion of the units in several privately-owned apartment structures; to purchase or lease existing single family structures; to construct or rehabilitate buildings especially suited to the needs of senior citizens; and to purchase buildings constructed by private contractors in accordance with federal public housing design criteria.

The Common Council approved new public housing sites on June 14, 1966 (J.C.C., p. 1805), January 16, 1968 (J.C.C., p. 93), February 27, 1968 (J.C.C., p. 385), May 9, 1969 (J.C.C., p. 1121), and other dates in accordance with criteria agreed upon by the Detroit Housing Commission and the City Plan Commission.

301.0201 Factors Governing the Location of Public Housing

Since public housing is a residential use of land, it has the same general location requirements as any other residential development. Sites should be located in areas which are good areas for living. They should be easily accessible by public transportation to places of employment and community facilities.

Beyond these general conditions, the management practices of the Detroit Housing Commission has established certain special requirements:

1. Dwelling units should be located so as to avoid the creation of large concentrations of public housing.
2. New structures should usually be terraces or apartments.
3. The gridiron street system should usually be modified to reduce the area in streets, to provide space for playgrounds, and to permit better orientation of buildings to desirable features in the local environment.
4. Public housing for senior citizens should be located near local shopping, religious, medical, and other service facilities.
5. All public housing should be conveniently located to public and private community services.
6. New public housing should be built on vacant sites, if possible, in order to minimize relocation problems.
7. Parking and other local service facilities built as a part of the development should relate in amount and location to the needs of the proposed occupants.

Implementation of these practices involves a careful choice of sites. When developments are to be located in clearance areas, these sites should be located so that internal streets may be closed without impairing traffic circulation. Furthermore, any given development site should be developed as an integral part of the neighborhood within which it lies, rather than as a separate entity with separate schools or playgrounds. Since a development site is much smaller in area than an entire neighborhood, it is usually desirable to have it border on a major thoroughfare. Access from the development site to the major thoroughfare permits direct discharge of traffic onto the thoroughfare without increasing traffic movements through the rest of the neighborhood, and provides excellent access to public transportation, which is usually available on major or secondary thoroughfares. A thoroughfare location is also desirable because it permits new public housing development to be reached without passing through blighted or non-residential areas. Rebuilding can be more effective in establishing a new character in the neighborhoods of the city if the rebuilding is started at clearly marked boundaries and proceeds progressively to contiguous areas.

301.0280 Other Policies Relating to Public Housing

Refer to Article 103 Summary, Section 202.0100 Neighborhood Unit Pattern and Section 202.0200 Community Pattern; Section 203.0100

Future General Land Use; and Article 204 Urban Change, for other city-wide policies that specifically relate to public housing development. The remainder of this chapter, Chapter III Urban Systems Policies and Chapter IV Urban Areas Policies, provide further information that relates, more generally, to public housing development.

301.0290 The Map

For current information see the map in the City Plan Commission offices entitled Public Housing - Detroit Master Plan. The map shows locations of existing public housing developments, and proposed housing sites including both determined and acquired. Scattered site public housing areas and individual structures are also shown.

301.0300 RESIDENTIAL CHANGE

301.0301 Definitions

Residential change refers to: (1) the improvement of residential areas for continued residential use; and (2) transition to or from residential uses.

301.0302 General Objectives

1. The process of residential change, whether it is by public urban renewal or by private action, should be conducted in a manner which is fair and just to all parties.
2. No tenant or owners shall be pressured through scare or harrassment tactics to sell or move.
3. When property is acquired, by public action, compensation should be adequate and reasonable for relocation into housing which is of at least comparable quality.
4. The level of city services to residences (such as code and ordinance enforcement, traffic control, the provision of education and recreational services, trash removal, and street cleaning) should be maintained at as high a level as maintained throughout the city. This may, in some cases, necessitate the imaginative use of a wide variety of short-term facilities which are either disposable or relocatable, or convertible to other uses.

301.0303 Residential Areas Appropriate for Conditional Industrial Development

In residential areas of the city which are proposed for industry on Master Plan maps, the city should insure that the well-being of the residents is protected while still providing for further industrial development necessary for employment, tax base, and industrial services and products.

To foster this policy:

1. Expansion of industrial activity into such residential areas should occur from the edges of the existing industrial area outward, and should occur in a manner which protects the remaining residential area from nuisances or dangers such as excessive heat, light, sound, radiation, odor, smoke, dust and traffic.

2. Residents should be protected through the regulations of the Zoning Ordinance against the further location of industrial activity in the interior of residential areas.

301.0304 Residential Change for Continuing Residential Use

In situations where the policy is to promote the improvement of a residential neighborhood through the introduction of residential structures which are different from the existing structures, the existing homes should be protected, and all new development should be made compatible with them.